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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to compile lists of the words used by kindergarten, first-grade, and second-grade children in their oral language and to examine differences in the diversity of the vocabularies among the three grade levels. Twenty-nine kindergarten, 25 first-grade, and 23 second-grade children, all of whom attended schools in middle-class neighborhoods, provided the oral language samples. The results of the study are provided in narrative and tabular format, and a ranked listing of the 250 most frequently spoken words at each of the three levels is included. (RB)

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THE SPEAKING VOCABULARIES OF KINDERGARTEN, FIRST-GRADE, AND SECOND-GRADE CHILDREN

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A paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Conference on Research in English, Washington, D.C., March 31, 1975.

The primary purpose of this study was to compile lists of the words used by kindergarten, first-, and second-grade children in their oral language. A secondary purpose was to examine differences in the diversity of the vocabularies among the three grade levels.

Background

Although there is presently much interest in the oral language of young children, the Murphy (1957) study of almost twenty years ago stands as the most extensive listing of the words children use in their speaking. Two notable additions, however, have been presented by Wepman and Hass (1969) who studied the vocabularies of 90 children and Sherk (1973) who did a word count of the spontaneous speaking vocabularies of black children ages four, five, and six.

Vocabulary diversity has been studied recently by Fox (1972) who found significant growth between second and third grade. And in a study

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comparing the speaking vocabularies of first-grade children with primer and trade-book vocabularies, Moe (1974) found no difference in diversity between the oral and trade-book vocabularies, but did find a difference between oral and primer vocabularies.

Of special interest to those involved in language analysis is the use of computers. A number of researchers (Kucera and Francis, 1967; Carroll, Davies, and Richman, 1971; Fox, 1972; Harris and Jacobson, 1972; McDaniel and Moe, 1973; Moe, 1973; and Moe 1974) have demonstrated that massive amounts of language may be analyzed by using computer programs. Such analyses have been primarily concerned with vocabulary. However, Golub and Kidder (1974) recently have developed a program which allows for measures of syntactic density.

Methods

Twenty-nine kindergarten, 25 first-grade and 23 second-grade children provided the oral language samples. The children all attended schools in middle class socioeconomic status neighborhoods. With the possible exception of ten of the second-grade children, the procedures used to elicit the oral language samples were the same for each child. Each child was interviewed individually by the examiner who asked the child to respond to the following:

1. What's your favorite game or sport?
2. What's your favorite television show?
3. Tell me a story.
4. What's the most exciting thing that ever happened to you?

All responses were recorded and transcribed. Later, the transcriptions were keypunched for computer analysis.

A separate printout with an analysis of each child's vocabulary was

provided. This printout provided information necessary to calculate the corrected type-token ratio (Carroll, 1964), a measure of vocabulary diversity, for each child. A one-way, unequal cell, analysis of variance was conducted to determine if there were grade level differences in vocabulary diversity.

Findings

While the mean oral vocabulary sample size for the three grade levels was 604 words, there was a range of from 59 to 1709 words collected in individual samples. This range of differences was most pronounced at the second-grade level where there were seven samples of less than 100 words. Information regarding the sample sizes and ranges together with the number of total words and the number of different words is summarized in Table I.

TABLE I

A SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REGARDING THE GRADE LEVEL AND COMBINED SAMPLE SIZES

Grade Level	N	Mean Sample Size	Median Sample Size	Range	Total Words	Different Words
Kindergarten	29	554	545	149-1,340	16,057	1,563
Grade One	25	742	622	190-1,524	18,555	1,774
Grade Two	23	516	183	59-1,709	11,868	1,301
Combined	77	604	567	59-1,709	46,484	2,782

A listing of the 250 most frequently spoken words for each of the three grade levels is provided in Tables II - IV and although a variety of comparisons may be made, only a few will be presented here. An ex-

TABLE II

A RANKED LISTING OF

THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY

MOST FREQUENTLY SPOKEN WORDS IN KINDERGARTEN

AND	6.67 %	THEM	.35	SAY	.15	THING	.10	WHO	.07						
I	4.30	LITTLE	.34	THEY≠RE	.15	ANY	.10	PEOPLE	.07						
THE	3.63	PLAYED	.34	SAD	.14	BIKE	.10	AWAY	.07						
TO	2.70	HIM	.34	YOUR	.14	SUPPER	.09	NEW	.07						
A	2.64	CAN	.34	HAT	.14	CAT	.09	TRIED	.07						
IT	2.11	DOWN	.34	OR	.14	LONG	.09	NAME	.07						
HE	1.78	PUT	.33	NOTHING	.14	SOMETIMES	.09	HERE	.06						
THEN	1.77	ABOUT	.32	CAN≠T	.14	EASTER	.09	JACK	.06						
MY	1.23	THERE≠S	.31	THREE	.14	BROKE	.09	INTO	.06						
YOU	1.22	SAID	.31	TOOK	.14	FRIENDS	.09	MAYBE	.06						
GOT	1.20	IT≠S	.31	AGAIN	.14	FRIEND	.09	EGGS	.06						
WE	1.18	SEE	.30	BY	.14	EAT	.09	HIT	.06						
ON	1.13	DOG	.29	GOES	.14	WOULD	.09	BATMAN	.06						
WAS	1.13	FOR	.29	OTHER	.13	GRANDMA	.09	EACH	.06						
DON≠T	1.09	BOY	.28	SAW	.13	TAKE	.09	FEEL	.06						
KNOW	1.07	GOING	.27	BUS	.13	VERY	.09	SOMEONE	.06						
THAT	.99	BACK	.25	MOTHER	.13	WHY	.09	LUNCH	.06						
ALL	.96	TWO	.25	WERE	.13	COULDN≠T	.09	FIVE	.06						
THEY	.93	CAME	.24	HER	.13	AFTER	.09	THESE	.06						
IN	.93	HOME	.23	TELL	.13	GOOD	.08	KIND	.06						
WENT	.89	HOUSE	.23	ARE	.13	RIDE	.08	GAME	.06						
HIS	.80	DIDN≠T	.22	PLAYING	.13	DOCTOR	.08	CATCH	.06						
OF	.72	ELSE	.21	ANOTHER	.13	DONE	.08	END	.06						
SHE	.66	TOO	.21	I≠M	.13	MORE	.08	YES	.06						
ONE	.66	LEG	.21	COULD	.13	LET	.08	BROKEN	.06						
BECAUSE	.66	TIME	.21	GIRL	.13	WASN≠T	.08	WEREWOLF	.06						
WITH	.64	SCHOOL	.20	THINGS	.13	WORK	.08	OLD	.06						
THAT≠S	.64	THINK	.19	FELL	.13	DOOR	.08	FLOOR	.06						
WELL	.59	JUST	.19	OFF	.12	DAY	.08	DOGGIE	.06						
GO	.56	HAS	.18	US	.12	TRY	.08	BUNNY	.06						
IS	.56	MOM	.18	STORY	.12	LOOKING	.08	BROTHER	.06						
SOME	.54	SOMETHING	.18	RED	.12	NEXT	.08	RAN	.06						
HAD	.53	BE	.18	FROM	.12	DIFFERENT	.08	EXCEPT	.06						
HAVE	.53	HURT	.18	WANT	.12	ALWAYS	.08	UNTIL	.06						
THERE	.52	COME	.18	SITTING	.12	GOTS	.08	STAY	.06						
PLAY	.51	DO	.18	CHAIR	.12	ANYMORE	.08	TOGETHER	.06						
GET	.51	HAPPY	.18	REAL	.11	REALLY	.08	GIANT	.05						
UP	.49	MAKE	.17	NO	.11	HOLDING	.08	HOLLY	.05						
WHEN	.49	OUR	.17	BED	.11	SNOOPY	.08	BABY	.05						
OUT	.46	ANYTHING	.17	NOT	.11	CAR	.08	SAYS	.05						
ME	.46	RIGHT	.17	NOW	.11	SISTER	.08	FIRST	.05						
BUT	.44	DID	.17	ONCE	.11	DAD	.08	BEFORE	.05						
HE≠S	.44	HOW	.17	STUFF	.11	WANTED	.07	WOMAN	.05						
SO	.43	ATE	.16	MOMMY	.11	THOUGHT	.07	WASH	.05						
WHAT	.41	CRYING	.16	SHE≠S	.11	EVEN	.07	LAST	.05						
THIS	.41	BIG	.16	MADE	.11	FOUR	.07	BREAKFAST	.05						
LIKE	.39	WHERE	.16	YESTERDAY	.11	LET≠S	.07	RUN	.05						
IF	.39	OUTSIDE	.16	NIGHT	.11	MEAN	.07	COMING	.05						
OVER	.37	WAY	.15	THEIR	.11	GAMES	.07	WATER	.05						
AT	.35	GETS	.15	MAN	.10	BLACK	.07	DAWN	.05						

TABLE III

A RANKED LISTING OF

THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY

MOST FREQUENTLY SPOKEN WORDS IN GRADE ONE

AND	7.48%	SOME	.35	ANY	.16	BE	.09	BASKETBALL	.07
THE	4.22	GOING	.34	THING	.16	RUN	.09	ARE	.07
A	2.64	HIM	.33	WAY	.16	HUH≠UH	.09	BALL	.07
I	2.50	HER	.33	ALWAYS	.16	TAKE	.09	WIN	.07
TO	2.49	DOWN	.32	BACK	.16	NOTHING	.09	WITCH	.07
IT	2.20	ABOUT	.31	MAKE	.16	CALLED	.09	TV	.07
THEN	2.02	CAME	.29	DOG	.16	LONG	.09	ROOM	.07
HE	1.98	SO	.29	ONCE	.15	PORRIDGE	.09	WALK	.07
YOU	1.87	TWO	.28	THEIR	.15	YOUR	.09	LET	.07
THEY	1.36	PUT	.27	NOT	.15	FROM	.09	NEXT	.07
IN	1.10	GOES	.27	WHO	.15	US	.09	NEVER	.07
WAS	1.09	TOO	.26	REMEMBER	.15	SHE≠S	.09	STARTED	.07
MY	1.08	THINK	.25	FIRST	.14	NOW	.09	DOESN≠T	.07
SHE	1.08	AT	.25	OFF	.14	CHECKERS	.09	COME	.07
THAT	1.05	TIME	.25	HOW	.14	NIGHT	.09	MOVE	.07
OF	1.00	HOUSE	.24	OUR	.13	TRY	.09	FUNNY	.07
ON	.98	CAN≠T	.24	BOY	.13	TELL	.09	HEAD	.07
LIKE	.90	ME	.24	ANOTHER	.13	TEAM	.08	HERE	.07
ONE	.89	DO	.23	MAN	.13	PERSON	.08	YOU≠RE	.07
ALL	.87	THREE	.22	ATE	.13	TICKED	.08	FAVORITE	.07
GOT	.83	BEAR	.22	SAW	.13	LAST	.08	LET≠S	.07
GO	.75	CAN	.22	ANYTHING	.13	MADE	.08	FOUND	.07
WE	.72	PLAY	.22	RED	.13	VERY	.08	GOOD	.07
HAVE	.69	FOR	.20	HIT	.13	WATER	.08	TOLD	.07
GET	.67	SAYS	.20	INTO	.12	EATING	.08	DAYS	.06
DON≠T	.65	YEAH	.19	BEEN	.12	SCHOOL	.08	GAVE	.06
KNOW	.63	BABY	.19	PEOPLE	.12	COULD	.08	CAT	.06
UP	.59	HAS	.19	I≠M	.12	FOUR	.08	WE≠RE	.06
THERE	.56	SOMETHING	.19	BROTHER	.12	MEAN	.08	BUTCH	.06
THEM	.55	NO	.19	WATCH	.12	KIND	.08	GRANDMA	.06
LITTLE	.55	OR	.18	THEY≠RE	.12	BASEBALL	.08	WASN≠T	.06
BUT	.53	WHAT	.18	DIDN≠T	.12	BAT	.08	GOTS	.06
THIS	.51	BED	.18	AGAIN	.12	EAT	.08	LIVE	.06
HIS	.50	OVER	.18	AWAY	.12	HARD	.08	LOT	.06
IT≠S	.50	STUFF	.18	TOOK	.11	COMES	.08	FATHER	.06
WHEN	.49	THINGS	.17	MORE	.11	WHOEVER	.08	BIKE	.05
BECAUSE	.49	DAD	.17	HE≠S	.11	CHICKEN	.08	SIDE	.05
WENT	.47	BIG	.17	WERE	.11	JUMP	.08	MAMA	.05
JUST	.46	HOME	.17	ONLY	.11	RAN	.08	SAY	.05
WELL	.45	MOM	.17	DID	.11	REALLY	.08	GUN	.05
HAD	.45	THESE	.17	OH	.11	DAY	.07	MANY	.05
IS	.40	AROUND	.17	FORGET	.10	EACH	.07	CAR	.05
THAT≠S	.40	RIGHT	.17	GAME	.10	BY	.07	SHOW	.05
THERE≠S	.39	GETS	.17	WANT	.10	FIVE	.07	TRIED	.05
SEE	.38	ELSE	.17	SOMEBODY	.10	DISHES	.07	PLACE	.05
OUT	.38	SOMETIMES	.17	WOULD	.10	GIRL	.07	PLAYING	.05
WITH	.37	MOTHER	.16	EVERY	.10	DOES	.07	AHEAD	.05
IF	.37	REAL	.16	AFTER	.10	APPLES	.07	DOOR	.05
OTHER	.35	SISTER	.16	BEARS	.09	WHERE	.07	GHOST	.05
SAID	.35	CHAIR	.16	MUCH	.09	BABY≠S	.07	LEG	.05

TABLE IV

A RANKED LISTING OF

THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY

MOST FREQUENTLY SPOKEN WORDS IN GRADE TWO

AND	8.72 %	WISH	.35	GAME	.15	ARM	.10	PAY	.07		
THE	3.87	WELL	.34	ANOTHER	.15	MAKE	.10	CAR	.07		
I	2.72	SOME	.33	COULD	.15	BOY	.10	DUCK	.07		
A	2.49	IF	.32	NO	.14	REALLY	.10	BY	.07		
IT	2.27	HER	.32	STARTED	.14	CAUGHT	.10	OH	.07		
TO	2.19	HOUSE	.32	STUFF	.13	NEW	.10	MAN	.07		
THEY	2.18	ME	.31	ROOM	.13	CAT	.10	LUCY	.06		
HE	1.83	KNOW	.29	ARE	.13	WANT	.10	SAY	.06		
YOU	1.70	SAID	.29	CALLED	.13	AROUND	.09	FUNNY	.06		
THEN	1.44	BIG	.28	MOTHER	.13	WHO	.09	THROW	.06		
LIKE	1.43	DO	.27	HAIR	.13	MADE	.09	COME	.06		
IN	1.31	AT	.27	SOMEBODY'S	.12	THEY'RE	.09	A'COMING	.06		
THAT	1.23	CAME	.26	TAKE	.12	SAW	.09	STEVE	.06		
SHE	1.17	TOO	.26	CAN'T	.12	CIRCLE	.09	PLACE	.06		
OF	1.17	WHAT	.26	WORDS	.12	TELL	.09	NOW	.06		
WAS	1.13	HOME	.26	SOMETHING	.12	OFF	.09	HEARD	.06		
MY	1.07	ABOUT	.26	MORE	.12	MOM	.09	HOW	.06		
ON	1.07	BUT	.26	AS	.11	HE'S	.08	HEAD	.06		
WE	.92	HAS	.25	MONEY	.11	NAME	.08	GIRLS	.06		
THIS	.81	OVER	.25	BED	.11	FIVE	.08	SAYS	.06		
ALL	.80	TIME	.25	NAMED	.11	INSIDE	.08	BEARS	.06		
ONE	.79	AFTER	.25	WATER	.11	MEAN	.08	MAMA	.06		
GOT	.74	THING	.24	INTO	.11	HILL	.08	LADY	.06		
HAD	.73	BACK	.24	TRY	.11	RED	.08	DODGEBALL	.06		
IS	.73	GOING	.23	SHOW	.11	RIDE	.08	BEHIND	.06		
WHEN	.70	BECAUSE	.23	HOT	.11	EACH	.08	AGAIN	.06		
IT'S	.69	BE	.22	LONG	.11	EVERY	.08	FUDD	.06		
HAVE	.64	WERE	.22	THESE	.11	YOU'RE	.08	WE'RE	.06		
GET	.64	PLAY	.21	THIRD	.11	FATHER	.08	AM	.06		
WENT	.64	REAL	.21	THINGS	.10	EVERYTHING	.08	WIN	.06		
SO	.58	TEAM	.21	ONCE	.10	PERSON	.08	READING	.05		
THERE	.57	THREE	.20	CHAIR	.10	BEAR'S	.08	LAND	.05		
THAT'S	.49	THINK	.20	PORRIDGE	.10	WHERE	.08	SOMETIMES	.05		
GO	.48	DON'T	.20	ANY	.10	FOUR	.08	HORSE	.05		
DOWN	.48	BABY	.19	WHITE	.10	FUN	.08	NEXT	.05		
OUT	.48	FIRST	.18	HIT	.10	BIKE	.08	DOCTOR	.05		
THEM	.47	JUST	.18	SIDE	.10	LOOKED	.08	ELSE	.05		
LITTLE	.46	PEOPLE	.18	MONKEY	.10	GOLDEN	.08	SOMEBODY	.05		
UP	.43	KIND	.18	PLAYED	.10	WAY	.08	MUCH	.05		
HIS	.41	BEAR	.18	OUR	.10	DADDY	.07	WATCHED	.05		
PUT	.41	BALL	.17	YOUR	.10	BLUE	.07	SPOON	.05		
HIM	.40	ALWAYS	.17	SCHOOL	.10	SLEEP	.07	ROAD	.05		
WITH	.40	NOT	.17	GIRL	.10	ELMER	.07	TOGETHER	.05		
GOES	.39	OR	.17	DAY	.10	TV	.07	KINDS	.05		
WOULD	.37	TOOK	.17	GETS	.10	SAME	.07	TRIED	.05		
OTHER	.37	THEIR	.17	SITTING	.10	UH'HUH	.07	SUPPOSED	.05		
SEE	.37	TWO	.17	NIGHT	.10	ACROSS	.07	OLD	.05		
THERE'S	.36	DIDN'T	.16	END	.10	FRIEND	.07	TOP	.05		
CAN	.35	BEEN	.16	SECOND	.10	FROM	.07	BOOKS	.05		
FOR	.35	RIGHT	.15	DID	.10	LOT	.07	YEAR	.05		

amination of the three lists indicates that and was the most commonly used word at each of the three grade levels with a percentage of use figure of 6.67 percent for kindergarten, 7.48 percent for first-grade, and 8.72 percent for second-grade children.

The second most common word spoken at the kindergarten level was I, representing 4.30 percent of the total words spoken, but at the first-, and second-grade levels it represented 2.50 percent and 2.72 percent respectively.

Although the order differs slightly, the words and, the, a, I, to, and it were the six most common words spoken at each of the three grade levels. The combined use of these words represents almost exactly 22 percent of the words spoken at each level.

Further examination of Tables II, III, and IV indicates that a relatively few words were repeated often in the oral language of the children sampled.

The 250 most commonly spoken words obtained from a combined analysis of all the samples, a total of 46,484 words, is presented in Table V.

Results of the analysis of variance when comparing corrected type-token ratios yielded a significant difference ($F(2,74) = 18.671$, $p < .001$) for grade level. Mean type-token ratios were found to be 5.62 for kindergarten, 6.24 for first grade, and 4.73 for second grade. Subsequent tests (Tukey-HSD) indicated significant differences between all pairs of means ($p < .05$). Thus, first-grade children had the most diverse and the second-grade children the least diverse vocabularies.

Because the investigators had been concerned with the small sample sizes obtained from some of the second-grade children, another analysis of variance was conducted omitting all samples of less than 100 total words. Seven second-grade type-token ratios were omitted and the analysis

TABLE V

A RANKED LISTING OF

THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY

MOST FREQUENTLY SPOKEN WORDS IN

KINDERGARTEN, GRADE ONE, AND GRADE TWO COMBINED

AND	7.52 %	SEE	.35	THEIR	.14	FROM	.10	GOOD	.08
THE	3.93	ME	.33	NOT	.14	LEG	.10	WASN'T	.08
I	3.18	PUT	.32	BED	.14	KIND	.10	PERSON	.08
A	2.60	SAID	.32	TOOK	.14	I'M	.09	MUCH	.08
TO	2.48	PLAY	.32	THINGS	.14	BY	.09	VERY	.08
IT	2.19	ABOUT	.30	OUR	.14	NOTHING	.09	SIDE	.08
HE	1.86	CAN	.29	WAY	.14	TRY	.09	BROKE	.08
THEN	1.79	JUST	.29	ALWAYS	.13	MADE	.09	SOMEBODY	.08
YOU	1.60	AT	.29	BEAR	.13	NOW	.09	WATCH	.08
THEY	1.42	GOING	.29	ANOTHER	.13	SAY	.09	FRIEND	.08
MY	1.13	WHAT	.28	CHAIR	.13	TEAM	.09	PORRIDGE	.08
WAS	1.11	OTHER	.28	AFTER	.13	BALL	.09	TV	.08
IN	1.09	FOR	.27	HOW	.13	WISH	.09	HOT	.08
THAT	1.08	OVER	.27	SCHOOL	.13	REMEMBER	.09	END	.08
ON	1.05	CAME	.27	ONCE	.13	SITTING	.09	DOOR	.08
SHE	.96	HER	.26	ANY	.13	CALLED	.09	GRANDMA	.08
OF	.95	GOES	.26	DID	.13	YEAH	.08	TRIED	.08
WE	.93	HOUSE	.26	THEY'RE	.12	AWAY	.08	WIN	.08
GOT	.92	TOO	.25	PEOPLE	.12	US	.08	CAUGHT	.08
ALL	.88	TWO	.24	FIRST	.12	DAY	.08	YOU'RE	.08
LIKE	.86	TIME	.23	SAW	.12	SHE'S	.08	BEARS	.08
ONE	.78	DO	.22	ATE	.12	CAT	.08	LAST	.08
KNOW	.69	THINK	.22	ANYTHING	.12	BROTHER	.08	GOTS	.08
DON'T	.68	HE'S	.21	OFF	.12	REALLY	.08	RAN	.08
WENT	.66	HOME	.21	THESE	.12	WATER	.08	HERE	.08
HAVE	.62	BACK	.21	SOMETIMES	.11	BIKE	.08	LET'S	.08
GO	.62	HAS	.20	YOUR	.11	STARTED	.08	NEW	.08
GET	.61	BIG	.20	COULD	.11	FOUR	.08	WANTED	.08
HIS	.58	THREE	.19	SAYS	.11	MEAN	.07	COULDN'T	.08
THIS	.55	CAN'T	.18	RED	.11	OUTSIDE	.07	MOMMY	.08
HAD	.55	BOY	.17	AGAIN	.11	PLAYING	.07	FORGET	.08
THERE	.55	SOMETHING	.17	WANT	.11	OH	.07	ONLY	.08
WHEN	.54	DOG	.17	ARE	.11	EVERY	.07	HARD	.08
IS	.53	OR	.17	MAN	.10	EACH	.07	WHY	.08
UP	.51	DIDN'T	.17	AROUND	.10	CRYING	.07	PLACE	.08
THAT'S	.50	WOULD	.16	WHO	.10	HURT	.07	SAD	.08
BECAUSE	.48	RIGHT	.16	MORE	.10	FIVE	.07	DOCTOR	.08
IT'S	.48	PLAYED	.16	TELL	.10	FELL	.07	FRIENDS	.08
WELL	.47	THING	.16	COME	.10	EAT	.07	AS	.08
WITH	.47	REAL	.16	SISTER	.10	STORY	.07	HAIR	.08
THEM	.46	BE	.16	WHERE	.10	NEXT	.07	HAT	.08
LITTLE	.46	ELSE	.15	INTO	.10	RIDE	.07	HUH/UH	.08
OUT	.43	MOM	.15	HIT	.10	HAPPY	.07	NAMED	.08
BUT	.43	NO	.15	BEEN	.10	LET	.07	WHOEVER	.08
SOME	.41	MAKE	.15	LONG	.10	CAR	.07	GAVE	.08
SO	.41	WERE	.15	TAKE	.10	RUN	.07	GAMES	.08
IF	.37	BABY	.14	GAME	.10	SHOW	.07	WHITE	.08
DOWN	.37	MOTHER	.14	GIRL	.10	ROOM	.07	JUMP	.08
THERE'S	.36	GETS	.14	DAD	.10	NAME	.06	SAME	.08
HIM	.35	STUFF	.14	NIGHT	.10	SUPPER	.06	FATHER	.08

was completed for 29 kindergarten, 25 first-grade, and 16 second-grade children. This analysis yielded a significant difference ($F(2,67) = 8.908$, $p < .001$) for grade level. However, subsequent tests (Tukey-HSD) indicated that the first-grade scores were significantly different ($p < .05$) from each of the other two grades, but there was no significant difference between kindergarten and grade two.

Discussion

The investigators believe that the oral language samples collected from the kindergarten and first-grade children were obtained through standard procedures and represent samples of sufficient size so that comparisons between these grade levels are appropriate. However, because the investigators believe there were deviations in the procedures used during the collection of the second-grade samples, they are reluctant to accept many of the second-grade samples as being indicative of vocabulary diversity which might be typically found at that level; the fact that there were so many small samples (under 200 words) supports this belief. Therefore, the results of the type-token ratio comparisons between the second grade and the other two grade levels must be interpreted with caution.

The investigators do believe, however, that the word lists generated at all three grade levels are useful additions to the present lists available. Hopefully, these lists will be studied by language researchers and used by language teachers.

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